



The President's Daily Brief

29 June 68

~~Top Secret~~ 29 June 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
29 JUNE 1968

1. France

[REDACTED]

The internal crisis has forced the French to abandon development of an intercontinental ballistic missile for the present. With the 1969 military budget now pegged at the 1968 level, the Defense Ministry cannot cover the additional costs for this weapon resulting from recent economic concessions.

[REDACTED]

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2. Thailand

[REDACTED]

Communist insurgents in the northeast are being hard pressed by Thai army operations. Over-all Communist activity has leveled off well below the highs established in early 1967.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the army has forced armed bands out of their base areas, disrupted supply sources, and undermined insurgent morale. The bands, however, remain intact.

In the northern provinces, guerrillas have recently become more aggressive and for the first time have struck army truck convoys. While the northeast is still the key Communist target, it is increasingly clear that the north has also become a major one.

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3. Cuba

The United States Intelligence Board has approved a National Intelligence Estimate on Cuba: Castro's Problems and Prospects over the Next Year or Two. This estimate concludes that:

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--Castro's problems have taken a turn for the worse over the past year. A severe drought has depressed sugar production and agriculture generally. Living conditions have become more stringent, and there has been an increase in popular discontent.

--Nonetheless, there is little prospect that economic adversity will significantly weaken Castro's position over the next couple of years. Even if economic conditions deteriorated further, Castro would still have the advantages of wide appeal, political skill, and ultimately, a formidable military-security apparatus.

--Although the level of future Soviet aid to Cuba probably will fluctuate, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union will permit the Cuban economy to approach a critical condition.

--It is doubtful that either Castro's economic difficulties or his contentious relationship with the Soviet Union will cause him to turn to the US. He will, however, seek to expand his trade with other non-Communist countries.

4. Gold Sales

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